

NSC BRIEFING

25X1

6 April 1960

IRAN

I. Soviet-Iranian relations have continued at an impasse since we discussed this subject here last month.

A. We still have no indication whether the Iranians have approached the Soviets, as they were considering doing, on the possibility of a meeting of the Shah and Khrushchev in Europe this spring.

II. At present it appears that Communist elements in Iran may be preparing to step up their activity. 25X1

C. This week the East German radio--which serves as a mouthpiece for the central committee of the outlawed Tudeh (Communist) party--broadcast a long message to Tudeh members in Iran urging "every revolutionary individual" to "revive the Tudeh organizations" and re-establish contact with one another.

D. We believe there is a good possibility that the Tudeh estimates it has made sufficient progress among Iranian students in Europe and among sympathizers in Iran that it can once more make a forceful show of strength.

III. The Shah, meanwhile, although concerned over the external Communist threat, apparently feels that things are going fairly well for his regime internally.

A. He is now hopefully expecting a son and heir to the throne.

25X1

1. The new queen's child is due by early fall; but if it's another daughter, it doesn't count.
 - B. New Majlis elections will be held this spring, and the Shah expects to make the parliament more pliable by judicious purging of deputies and selection of new candidates.
 - D. In mid-March the Shah forced the present Majlis to approve a land-reform bill over the strong objections from powerful landlords, and he believes this bill will broaden support for monarchy.
- IV. We believe the prospects for stability of the Shah's regime have not improved.
- A. Considerable dissatisfaction continues over the Shah's dictatorial role, the lack of improvements for the lower classes, and corruption in government.
 - B. Legal measures such as the new land-reform bill--which could have far-reaching effects on popular opinion over the long term--in the short run probably weaken rather than strengthen the regime.
 1. Reform bills such as this infuriate those vested interests which are the traditional mainstays of the monarchy, and fail to attract any substantial support from the middle- and lower-classes which are interested only in immediate results.

25X1

25X1